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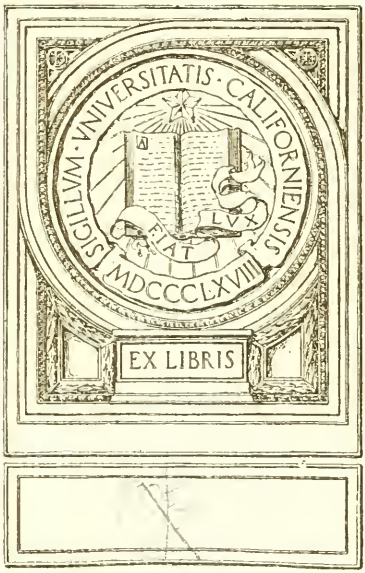
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E. Harding Sculp.

William Pinkethman in the Character of Don Lewis in the Fop's Fortune.
From an Original Drawing by Vertue in the Collection of Richd Bull Esqr.

THE

ORIGIN

OF

THE ENGLISH STAGE;

WITH

MEMOIRS

of

Celebrated Performers,

ACCOMPANIED BY

THEIR PORTRAITS;

OF MANY OF WHOM THERE ARE NO OTHER PRINTS EXTANT.

BY F. G. WALDRON,
Editor of the "Literary Museum," Harding's "Biographical Mirror," &c.

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THE

ENGLISH STAGE.

IT is impoſſible to aſcertain the exact period when theatrical amuſements were firſt introduced into England; they are mentioned as having exiſted very early by William Fitz-Stephen, a Monk of Canterbury, in his *Deſcriptio nobiliſſimæ civitatis Lundoniæ*, written ſoon after the year 1170. "Lundonia pro ſpectaculis theatralibus, pro ludis ſcenicis, ludos habet ſanctiores, repræſentationes miraculorum quæ ſancti confeſſores operati ſunt, ſeu repreſentationes paſſionum, quibus claruit conſtantia martyrum."---London, inſtead of common interludes belonging to the Theatre, has plays of a more holy ſubject: repreſentations of thoſe miracles which the holy confeſſors wrought, or of the ſufferings wherein the glorious conſtancy of the martyrs did appear.

Theſe repreſentations being mentioned as neither new or uncommon, we may reaſonably conclude them to be of a date ſtill more ancient; and they continued a long time after to be the only ſubjects for the drama; in which Pater Cœleſtis, or The Heavenly Father, Our Bleſſed Saviour, The Virgin Mary, The Twelve Apoſtles, &c. were the leading characters. In the year 1378 the Scholars of Paul's School preſented a petition to King Richard II. praying him to prohibit ſome inexpert people from preſenting the Hiſtory of the Old Teſtament, to the great prejudice of the ſaid clergy, who had been at great expence in order to repreſent it at Chriſtmas.

On the 18th of July, 1390, the Pariſh Clerks of London (by which expreſſion we are to underſtand, *The Clergy)* played Enterludes at the *Skinner's Well*, near *Clerkenwell*; which continued three days: King Richard II. his Queen, and Nobles being preſent. And in the year 1409 they performed a play at the *Skinner's Well*, the ſubject being *The Creation of the World*; which laſted eight days: having the chief nobles and gentry of England for their audience.

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These *Myſteries*, as they were denominated, were followed by a ſpecies of the drama, ſtiled *Moralities*, in which the ſenſes, paſſions, affections, virtues, and vices, were perſonified, and conſtituted the characters: theſe being of a moral turn, and contrived to entertain as well as inſtruct, ſoon exhibited ſome dawnings of poetry, with occaſional attempts at wit and humour, which naturally introduced *Comedy*: the earlieſt Engliſh piece, meriting that title, is *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, written by Dr. Still; performed at Chriſt's College, Cambridge, and printed in 1551. *Tragedy* ſoon after appeared with becoming dignity in *Ferrex* and *Porrex*, otherwiſe *Gorboduc*; written by Thomas Sackville and Thomas Norton: the former, who was afterwards Lord Buckhurſt, &c. was alſo author of the admirable Induction to The Complaint of Henry Duke of Buckingham, in *The Mirror for Magiſtrates*.

This noble and pathetic Tragedy was acted before Queen Elizabeth, January 18, 1561; was ſpuriouſly printed in 1565, and afterwards, under the author's inſpection, in 1570 or 1571.

At this period a Fool was almoſt indiſpenſible on the Stage, not only in Comedies but alſo in the deepeſt Tragedies; of which character no dramatic writer has availed himſelf more ſucceſsfully than Shakſpeare: his *Touchſtone* in *As You Like It*, and *Fool* in *King Lear*, being, among many others which he produced, remarkable inſtances.

In the infancy of the Stage the players were prieſts; afterwards retainers to noblemen, under the ſanction of whoſe name they performed; at length they were embodied and incorporated under royal authority: and, in the end, reſtricted and protected by Acts of Parliament, framed for the preſervation of order and decorum in themſelves; and their ſafety and encouragement in the exhibition of the ſcenic art.

When the *Myſteries* were the only dramatic performances, the ſtage conſiſted of three diſtinct platforms, raiſed one above another; on the uppermoſt ſat the *Pater Cœleſtis*, ſurrounded with his angels; on the ſecond appeared the glorified ſaints; and the loweſt was occupied by mere men, who had not yet quitted "the ſmoke and ſtir of this dim ſpot." On one ſide of this loweſt platform was the reſemblance of a dark and pitchy cavern,

whence iſſued an appearance of fire and flames; and, when neceſſary, the audience were ſtunned by hideous yellings, imitative of the howlings of wretched ſouls, tormented by relentleſs demons, who frequently aſcended through the mouth of the cavern to delight the ſpectators with their buffooneries, and to inſtruct them, by their remorſeleſs cruelty to the condemned, carefully to ſhun the commiſſion of ſuch crimes, as might plunge themſelves into a ſimilar predicament.

In an improved ſtate of the Theatre, when regular plays were introduced, the cavern, with its concomitant, though heterogeneous, mixture of horror and nummery, was aboliſhed; the uppermoſt platform, and its celeſtial *perſonæ*, alſo diſappeared; two platforms only remaining, which continued in uſe a conſiderable time; the upper one ſerving for galleries, ramparts, or any other elevated ſituation, from which ſome of the actors might diſcourſe with others, ſtanding on the lower one, now called *the ſtage*.

The characters from the earlieſt times to that of the Reſtoration were perſonated by men or boys; at which period Mrs. Hughs was the firſt female who appeared in a regular drama, in the character of Deſdemona: unleſs, as Mr. Malone with great appearance of probability conjectures, Mrs. Sanderſon (afterwards Mrs. Betterton) may claim priority.

The ſtage decorations and ornaments (if they may be ſo called) were formerly very homely; a piece of old tapeſtry ſerving for the ſcene; which you was to imagine, as the ſtory of the drama required, repreſented a ſtreet, a grove, a caſtle, or the ocean; the ſtage was ſtrewed with ruſhes, and the dreſſes made of buckram and baize, laced with lacquered leather: but what better could be expected for the prices taken? for, at ſo low a rate as *two-pence* were ſome of the ſeats in our ancient theatres; there were others at 6d.; 1s.; and (the higheſt) 2s. 6d. Some of the audience ſat on ſtools upon the ſtage; drank wine and beer, crack'd nuts, and ſmoked tobacco during the performance. The *Myſteries* were frequently repreſented in churches, and on the ſabbath; which practice it is thought was continued even after prophane ſubjects had been introduced: the playing in churches was reſtrained by Biſhop Bonner, in 1542, but the acting of plays on the ſabbath-day continued till the reign of Charles I. at

which period the players generally began to act at three o'clock in the afternoon, that the whole might be performed by day-light.

The *Myſteries* ſeem in later times to have furniſhed the ground-work for another noted ſtage-performance, entitled *a Puppet-ſhew*; as appears from the following bill, printed in the reign of Queen Anne; taken from the Collection of Title Pages in the Harleian Library, marked 5931:

"By her Majeſty's permition, at Heatly's booth, over againſt the *Croſs Daggers*, next to Mr. Miller's booth, during the time of *Bartholomew fair*, will be preſented a little opera, called The *old Creacion of the World* new revived, with the addition of the glorious *battle* obtained over the *French* and *Spaniards* by his Grace the Duke of *Marlborough*. The contents are theſe, 1. The creation of *Adam* and *Eve*. 2. The intrigues of *Lucifer* in the garden of *Eden*. 3. *Adam* and *Eve* driven out of *Paradice*. 4. *Cain* going to plow; *Abel* driving ſheep. 5. *Cain* killeth his brother *Abel*. 6. *Abraham* offereth up his ſon *Iſaac*. 7. Three wiſe men of the *Eaſt*, guided by a ſtar, come and worſhip *Chriſt*. 8. *Joſeph* and *Mary* flee away by night, upon an aſs. 9. King *Herod*'s cruelty; his *mens* ſpears *laden* with *children*. 10. Rich *Dives* invites his *friends*, and orders his *porter* to keep the beggars from his gate. 11. Poor *Lazarus* comes a begging at rich *Dives* gate, the dogs lick his ſores. 12. The good Angel and Death contend for *Lazarus*'s life. 13. Rich *Dives* is taken ſick, and dieth; he is buried in great ſolemnity. 14. Rich *Dives* in Hell, and *Lazarus* in Abraham's boſom, ſeen in a moſt glorious object, all in machines deſcending in a throne, guarded with multitudes of angels; with the breaking of the clouds, diſcovering the palace of the ſun, in double and treble proſpects, to the admiration of all the ſpectators.---Likewiſe ſeveral rich and large figures, which dances *jiggs*, *ſarabands*, *anticks*, and *country dances*, between every act; compleated with the merry humours of *Sir Jn° Spendall* and *Punchanello*, with ſeveral other things never expoſed. Performed by Mat. Heatly. —

VIVAT REGINA."

A celebrated comedian's contemporary exhibition was much more ſimple; of whoſe bill of fare the following is a copy.

" Penkethman's Pantheon, conſiſting of ſeveral curious pictures and moving figures, repreſenting the fabulous Hiſtory of the Heathen Gods. The whole contains 14 ſeveral entertainments, and near 100 figures (beſides *ſhips*, *beaſts*, *fiſh*, *fowl*, and other embelliſhments) ſome near a foot in height; all which have their reſpective and peculiar motions, their very heads, legs, arms, hands, and fingers artificially moving exactly to what they perform, and ſetting one foot before another, as they go, like living creatures, in ſuch manner that nothing but *nature* itſelf can exceed it: in ſhort, the *painting* is by the fineſt hands, and the *ſtory* and contrivance ſo admirable, that it juſtly deſerves to be eſteemed one of the greateſt wonders of the age."

The ſtage-decorations and ornaments, before the Reſtoration, were extremely plain and ſimple, as may be gathered from ſome ancient frontiſpieces to plays; wherein, inſtead of a ſcene, are ſeveral curtains in the front, divided by intermediate columns; the ſpaces between which ſerved the actors for their entrances and retirings, drawing the curtains aſide for that purpoſe. Names were affixed over the top of each avenue, to diſtinguiſh the portals of different dwellings, belonging to the various characters; from which they entered, and into which they returned, unleſs the buſineſs of the piece required them to enter each other's habitations: and theſe labels were probably placed over the ſeveral curtains, as directions to the actors, and information to the ſpectators.

The ſides of the ſtage were hung with tapeſtry, there being no places of entrance there till the introduction of ſcenery; when front ſcenes came in uſe, ſide entrances alſo were adopted: and, by degrees, through a long ſucceſſion of years, the numerous improvements which have been made, have given to the metropolitan theatres an elegance, ſplendor and magnificence, which ſcarcely any other ſtructures can boaſt of.

A reflection naturally ariſes, producing theſe queſtions; have our later plays as much excelled the earlier, as our modern theatres ſurpaſſed the

ancient ones?—What have we, of this age, to compare with the pathos of *Othello*, and the ſublimity of *Macbeth*? nothing better than the mean, though moral, proſe of *Barnwell*; and the heavy, though affecting paſtoral of *Douglas*.

Having thus given a brief ſketch of the riſe and progreſs of the Engliſh Stage, till it had attained a legitimate form; it becomes neceſſary to ſpecify the early theatres: which, as it cannot be more accurately done, the reader is requeſted to take in the words of Mr. Malone.—Early in Queen Elizabeth's reign, the eſtabliſhed players of London began to act in temporary theatres conſtructed in the yards of inns; and about the year 1570, I imagine, one or two regular playhouſes were erected. Both the theatre in Blackfriars, and that in Whitefriars, were certainly built before 1580.—The moſt ancient Engliſh playhouſes, of which I have found any account, are, the playhouſe in *Blackfriars*, that in *Whitefriars*, *The Theatre*, of which I am unable to aſcertain the ſituation, and *The Curtain*, in Shoreditch. *The Theatre*, from its name, was probably the firſt building erected in or near the metropolis purpoſely for ſcenick exhibitions. In the time of Shakſpeare there were ſeven principal theatres; three private houſes, namely, that in *Blackfriars*, that in *Whitefriars*, and *The Cockpit* or *Phœnix*, in Drury-lane; and four that were called publick theatres, viz. *The Globe*, on the Bank-ſide; *The Curtain*, in Shoreditch; *The Red Bull*, at the upper end of St. John's-ſtreet; and *The Fortune*, in Whitecroſs-ſtreet. The laſt two were chiefly frequented by citizens. There were, however, but ſix companies of comedians; for the playhouſe in *Blackfriars*, and *The Globe*, belonged to the ſame troop. Beſide theſe ſeven theatres, there were for ſome time on the Bank-ſide three other publick theatres; *The Swan*, *The Roſe*, and *The Hope*: but *The Hope* being uſed chiefly as a bear-garden, and *The Swan* and *The Roſe* having fallen to decay early in King James's reign, they ought not to be enumerated with the other regular theatres.

All the plays of Shakſpeare appear to have been performed either at *The Globe*, or at the theatre in *Blackfriars*. The theatre in *Blackfriars*

was ſituated near the preſent Apothecaries-hall, in the neighbourhood of which the theatre probably ſtood. It was, as has been mentioned, a private houſe; but what were the diſtinguiſhing marks of a private playhouſe, it is not eaſy to aſcertain. We know only that it was ſmaller than thoſe which were called publick theatres; and that in the private theatres plays were uſually performed by candle-light. *The Globe* was a publick theatre, and of conſiderable ſize, and there they always acted by day-light. I believe it was not built long before the year 1596. It was ſituated on the Bank-ſide, (the ſouthern ſide of the river Thames,) nearly oppoſite to Friday-ſtreet, Cheapſide. It was an hexagonal wooden building, partly open to the weather, and partly thatched. On the roof of this and the other publick theatres a pole was erected, to which a flag was affixed. Theſe flags were probably diſplayed only during the hours of exhibition.

I formerly conjectured that *The Globe*, though hexagonal at the outſide, was perhaps a rotunda within, and that it might have derived its name from its circular form. But, though the part appropriated to the audience was probably circular, I now believe that the houſe was denominated only from its ſign; which was a figure of Hercules [quære? Atlas] ſupporting the Globe, under which was written, *Totus mundus agit hiſtrionem.* This theatre was burnt down on the 29th of June, 1613; but it was rebuilt in the following year, and decorated with more ornament than had been originally beſtowed upon it. The exhibitions at *The Globe* ſeem to have been calculated for the lower claſs of people; thoſe at *Blackfriars* for a more ſelect and judicious audience. *The Theatre* and *The Curtain* are mentioned and inveighed againſt in ſermons, and ſatires, publiſhed in 1578, 1580, and 1583; the original ſign hung out at the latter was the painting of a curtain, ſtriped. The performers at this theatre were called *The Prince's Servants*, till the acceſſion of King Charles the Firſt to the crown. Soon after that period it ſeems to have been uſed only by prize-fighters. *The Cockpit* or *Phœnix* had been originally a cockpit. It was built or rebuilt not very long before the year 1617, in which year it was

pulled down by the mob. I ſuppoſe it was ſometimes called *The Phœnix* from that fabulous bird being its ſign. It was ſituated oppoſite the Caſtle-tavern in Drury-lane, and was ſtanding ſome time after the Reſtoration. The players who performed at this theatre in the time of King James the Firſt, were called *The Queen's Servants*, till the death of Queen Anne, in 1619. After her death they were, I think, for ſome time, denominated *The Lady Elizabeth's Servants*; and after the marriage of King Charles the Firſt, they regained their former title of the Queen's Players. *The Fortune* is ſaid to have been the oldeſt theatre in London. It was rebuilt in 1599 by Edward Alleyn, the celebrated player. It was a round, brick building, of very conſiderable dimenſions; before, it was either a picture or ſtatue of Fortune. It was burnt down in 1621. *The Swan* and *The Roſe* were ſhut up in 1613; the latter had been built before 1598: about the year 1620 they were uſed occaſionally for the exhibition of prize-fighters. Ben Jonſon's *Bartholomew-Fair* was performed at *the Hope*, in 1614: in the *Induction* to which he does not give a very favourable deſcription of it. "Though the fair be not kept in the ſame region that ſome here perhaps would have it, yet think that the author hath therein obſerved a ſpecial decorum, the place being as dirty as *Smithfield*, and as ſtinking every whit."

In 1574 Queen Elizabeth granted a licence to James Burbage, probably the father of the celebrated tragedian, and four others, ſervants to the Earl of Leiceſter, to exhibit all kinds of ſtage-plays, during pleaſure, in any part of England, "as well for the recreation of her loving ſubjects, as for her own ſolace and pleaſure when ſhe ſhould think good to ſee them;" and in the year 1583, twelve of the principal comedians of that time, at the earneſt requeſt of Sir Francis Walſingham, were ſelected from the companies then ſubſiſting, under the licence and protection of various noblemen, and were ſworn her Majeſty's Servants: among theſe twelve players were Thomas Wilſon, and the famous Richard Tarleton.

As Tarleton was not only one of the earlieſt but alſo the moſt excellent of our Engliſh comedians, ſo far as native humour, and the then-rude ſtate of the drama, could entitle him to that character, ſome anecdotes and memorials of him claim priority.

Richard Tarlton, or Tarleton, was born at Condover, in the county of Salop; but when, or at what period he commenced actor, is unknown. He was brought to London, and introduced at Court by a ſervant of Robert, Earl of Leiceſter, who found him in a field, keeping his father's ſwine; and that nobleman, being highly pleaſed with the pertinent replies made to the queſtions aſked him, took him under his patronage.

Having acquired celebrity on the ſtage, he was ſelected for one of the Queen's ſervants, and had wages and a livery allowed him as groom of the chamber; which cuſtom continued till the time of Colley Cibber: his royal miſtreſs was ſo delighted with his humour, that, as Fuller ſays, "when Queen Elizabeth was ſerious, (I dare not ſay ſullen) he could "undumpiſh her at pleaſure. Her higheſt favourites would in ſome "caſes go to Tarlton before they would go to the Queen, and he was "their uſher to prepare their advantageous acceſs unto her. In a word, "he told the Queen more of her faults than moſt of her chaplains, and "cured her melancholy better than all her phyſicians." He was in ſuch eſtimation, that even his picture was hung out by ſhopkeepers for their ſign; and, in the Theatre, he needed only to be ſeen to produce general acclamations. There cannot be a doubt of his having poſſeſſed the *vis comica* in a ſuper-eminent degree. Dr. Cave, *De Politica*, Oxf. 1588. 4to. ſays, "Ariſtoteles ſuum Theodoretum laudavit quendam peritum "tragaediarum actorem, Cicero ſuum Roſcium, nos Angli *Tarletonum* in "cujus voce & vultu omnes jocoſi affectus, in cujus cerebroſo capite "lepidæ facetiæ habitant." And Fuller ſays, that "much of his mer-"riment lay in his very looks and actions, according to the epitaph "written upon him:

"His ſitus eſt cujus poterat vox, actio, vultus,
"Ex Heraclito reddere Democritum."

This is given, with ſome variation, in Hackett's *Select and Remarkable Epitaphs*, 1757. v. 2. p. 59. In Peacham's *Thalia's Banquet*, 8vo. 1620, it is ſaid that,

" ——— Tarlton when his head was onely ſeene,
" The Tire-houſe doore and Tapiſtrie betweene,
" Set all the multitude in ſuch a laughter,
" They could not hold for ſcarſe an houre after."

He is repreſented with his tabor, &c. in a drawing in the Pepyſian Library, at Magdalen College, Cambridge; and in a rare old pamphlet, entituled " Chettle's [Henrie] Kind Harts Dreame, conteining five Apparitions, with their Invectives againſt Abuſes raigning. [the Apparitions are thoſe of *Meſter Anthony*, *Tarlton*, *Will Cuckowe*, *Dr. Burcot*, and *Rob. Greene*] B. L. impr. for *Will. Wright*," 4to. no date, but publiſhed in December, 1592, he is deſcribed correſpondently with the above-mentioned picture. " The next, by his ſuit of ruſſet, his " buttoned cap, his taber, his ſtanding on the toe, and other tricks, I knew " to be either the body or reſemblance of Tarlton, who living, for his " pleaſant conceits was of all men liked, and dying, for mirth left not his " like."

And Sir Richard Baker, in his Chronicle, after due praiſe given to Allen and Burbage, ſays, " to make their comedies complete, Richard " Tarleton, for the part called the Clownes Part, never had his match, never will have."

He is ſaid to have ſacrificed the bridge of his noſe at the ſhrine of Venus; by others it is related, that the flatneſs of that feature in his face was occaſioned by his interpoſing between ſome bears and dogs; probably at Paris Garden, on the Bank-ſide, Southwark: which, he uſed to ſay, did not ſo much affect him, but that he could ſmell an honeſt man from a knave.

He was author of a dramatic piece, ſtiled by Gabriel Harvey a *famous play*, but which is now loſt, called *The Seven Deadly Sins*.

After an eccentric life, he died a ſincere penitent in 1588, and was buried September the third of that year in St. Leonard's, Shoreditch.

To treat of the Profeſſors of the Stage in ſome degree chronologically, it is neceſſary, though the Father of our Drama could not be introduced ſooner, that he ſhould be mentioned as the third eminent Engliſh Actor we have any account of; though, whatever celebrity he acquired as a Performer, has been almoſt loſt in the ſuperior blaze of fame attached to him as an Author. William Shakeſpeare, Shakſpeare, or Shakſpere (for his name was variouſly written, even by himſelf), was born at Stratford upon Avon in Warwickſhire, in April, 1564. His father, Mr. John Shakſpeare, enjoyed ſome hereditary lands and tenements, the reward of his grandfather's faithful and approved ſervices to King Henry the Seventh; he was alſo a conſiderable dealer in wool: and in the year 1569 was High-Bailiff (now called Mayor) of the body corporate of Stratford. From a note in the College of Arms it appears, that he was a juſtice of the peace, and poſſeſſed lands and tenements to the amount of £500, but, from other documents, it is evident that in 1586 he was much reduced in his circumſtances. Our Poet's mother was the daughter and heir of Robert Arden of Wellincote, in the county of Warwick; who, in the MS. above referred to, is called "a gentleman of worſhip." The family of *Arden* is a very ancient one; Robert Arden of Bromwich, Eſq; being in the liſt of the gentry of this county, returned by the commiſſioners in the twelfth year of King Henry VI. A. D. 1433. Edward Arden was Sheriff of the county in 1568. Such was the genealogy of Him whoſe Divine Spirit ſeemed rather to have been derived from Super-terreſtrial Beings! His ſlight and ruſtic education; his being obliged to work at his father's buſineſs; the probability of his drudging ſome time in the office of a country attorney; his early marriage with the daughter of a yeoman named Hathaway, who was eight years older than himſelf, and outlived him ſeven years; his *only* imputed miſdeed, the robbing a park belonging to Sir Thomas Lucy, of Charlecote, near Stratford, of ſome veniſon; which, happily, drove him to London: are circumſtances ſo well known, that the bare mention of them in this ſketch is ſufficient. In London, then, commences the hiſtrionic, though perhaps not the poetic, memoirs of

Shakſpeare; and, if tradition may be credited, never was the ſcriptural adage, "the humble ſhall be exalted," more fully verified than in him; who, on his firſt arrival in the metropolis, hungry, perhaps, and penny-leſs! patiently ſubmitted to the menial occupation of holding the horſes of ſuch perſons as viſited thoſe Theatres, which his pen was afterwards to reſcue from barbariſm and meanneſs, and elevate to ſublimity and magnificence.

From the Doors his diligence and punctuality ſoon recommended him to the Interior of the Theatre; where he is ſaid to have firſt officiated as Call-boy, or Prompter's attendant: whoſe employment it is to give the performers notice to be ready, as often as the buſineſs of the play requires their appearance on the ſtage.

He is next traced (in ſuppoſition) to have been the repreſentative of *Itis*, in Tarleton's "SECOUND PARTE OF THE SEVEN DEADLIE SINNS." the *Platt* only of which "famous play," as it was denominated, is now in being. Such were the Theatrical Degrees taken by this Great Maſter of Nature as well as Art!

Mr. Aubrey ſays that "He was a handſome well-ſhaped man, verie good company, and of a very ready, pleaſant, and ſmooth witt;" and that, "Being inclined naturally to poetry and acting, he came to London, and was an actor at one of the playhouſes, and did act exceedingly well."

Henry Chettle, in the preface to a pamphlet entitled *Kinde-Hartes Dreame*, publiſhed 1592, ſpeaking (it is preſumed) of Shakſpeare, ſays, "My ſelfe have ſeene his demeanour no leſs civil than he EXCELLENT *in the qualitie he profeſſes:* beſides, divers of worſhip have reported his uprightneſs of dealing, which argues his honeſtie, and his facetious grace in writing, that approves his art." In which "*the qualitie he profeſſes*," according to the language of the time, particularly denoted his profeſſion as an *actor*. "Come, give us a taſte of your *quality*; come, a paſſionate ſpeech," ſays Hamlet to the Player.

That Shakſpeare was a better Poet than he was an Actor may be readily allowed, and yet he might have been an actor of great eminence; for,

as hath been well obſerved, if the various powers and peculiar excellencies of all the actors from his time to the preſent, were united in one man, it may well be doubted, whether they would conſtitute a performer whoſe merit ſhould entitle him to "bench by the ſide" of Shakſpeare as a Poet.

The gentleneſs of his manners, and the readineſs of his wit, have been celebrated by all his contemporaries who have ſpoken of him; his fellow comedians ſay, "as he was a happy imitator of nature, ſo was he a moſt gentle expreſſer of it. His mind and hand went together; and what he thought he uttered with that eaſineſs, that we have ſcarce received from him a blot in his papers." And "my *gentle* Shakſpeare" is the compellation uſed to him by Ben Jonſon; who ſays that "he was indeed *honeſt, and of an open and free nature*; had an excellent fancy, brave notions, and gentle expreſſions; wherein he flowed with that facility, that ſometimes it was neceſſary he ſhould be ſtopped. *Sufflaminandus erat*, as Auguſtus ſaid of Haterius."

That he had a perfect knowledge of the dramatic art is certain, from the maſterly inſtructions which he has made Hamlet give to the Player; nor could his practic fall ſhort of his theoretic ſkill, or he would never have made the Daniſh prince deſcribe ſo forcibly his (Shakſpeare's) *piteous action*, in the repreſentation of *the Ghoſt*, which is generally allowed to have been his chef d'ouvres, unleſs the *action* had been really *piteous* and affecting. What other characters he performed is unknown, excepting that from circumſtances he is believed to have been the repreſentative of *Adam*, in his own *As You Like It*; and *Old Knowell*, in Ben Jonſon's *Every Man in his Humour:* he alſo performed in Jonſon's *Sejanus*, but what character is uncertain; and it is ſurmiſed that he acted *Duncan*, in *Macbeth*; the parts of *King Henry the Fourth*, and *King Henry the Sixth*, in his own plays bearing thoſe titles: or ſimilar regal and venerable characters.

His merits did not paſs unnoticed, or unrewarded; for in the year 1603, when he was about forty years of age, King James I. granted him, in conjunction with Laurence Fletcher, Richard Burbage, and others, a Licence or Patent "freely to uſe and exerciſe the art and faculty of playing comedies, tragedies, &c. as well within theire nowe uſuall houſe called the Globe,

within our county of Surrey, as alſo within anie towne-halls or moute-halls, or other convenient places within the liberties and freedom of any other citie, univerſitie, toun or boroughe whatſoever, within our ſaid realmes and dominions." And it is traditionally ſaid, that the Earl of Southampton at one time preſented him with a thouſand pounds; a great ſum in thoſe, or indeed in any days, for a gift: and an uncommon inſtance of munificence in a patron to a poet! Hapleſs *Chatterton!* hadſt thou but found another *Wriothesley*, Britain might have boaſted of another *Shakſpeare!* During a period of about twenty-five years our matchleſs bard produced at leaſt thirty-ſix plays (admitting the three parts of King Henry the Sixth, and Pericles, to have been his) moſt of which are ſuperlatively fine: he alſo wrote the beautiful, though prolix, poems of Venus and Adonis, and The Rape of Lucrece; beſides a great number of ſmaller, detached poems, and ſonnets. Having realized a genteel fortune, he retired from the ſtage to his native town; where, after two or three years paſſed in rural tranquillity, he paid the Debt of Nature, April 23, 1616, aged 53 years; and was interred in the great church at Stratford.

The compiler of this ſketch having, in a former publication, ſuppoſed Shakſpeare to have been an actor of very moderate abilities, (which opinion he retracts) has collected therein the following hints relating to him, not elſewhere noticed; yet, perhaps, not unworthy of obſervation.

"There is a circumſtance relating to Shakſpeare, which I have not obſerved to be remarked by any one who has written concerning him; that is his *lameneſs*, which he mentions in his 37th ſonnet.

"As a *decrepit* father takes delight
"To ſee his active child do deeds of youth,
"So I, made *lame* by fortune's deareſt ſpite,
"Take all my comfort of thy worth and truth."

And again in his 89th ſonnet.

"Say that thou didſt forſake me for ſome fault,
"And I will comment upon that offence:
"Speak of my *lameneſs*, and I ſtrait will *halt*,
"Againſt thy reaſons making no defence."

If this *lameneſs* is to be taken literally, it may ſerve as a very ſufficient reaſon, together with his having perhaps but an indifferent voice, why Shakſpeare *could not* be an eminent actor.

Our poet is known to have performed *Adam* in *As You Like It*; and I cannot help thinking that in writing the play, having intended the part for himſelf, he has twice in the ſecond act adverted to his own perſonal defect: the firſt time in a ſpeech of Adam's. "When ſervice ſhould in my old limbs lie *lame*." And afterwards in a ſpeech of Orlando's.

"——There is an old poor man,
"Who after me hath many a weary ſtep
"*Limp'd* in pure love."

Which laſt ſeems to me particularly deſcriptive of Shakſpeare's *halting*, or *limping* gait.

In his 37th ſonnet there is alſo an implication of his being *poor* and *deſpiſed*; and in his 90th ſonnet he ſays, "Now while *the world is bent my deeds to croſs*." What misfortunes in his life he therein alludes to, it is now in vain to enquire; or, if he really was lame, to what accident it was owing."

Our poet's wife, whoſe chriſtian name was Anne, outlived him ſeven years, as hath been obſerved; ſhe died Auguſt 6, 1623, aged 67 years; and was interred in Stratford church, Auguſt 8, 1623.

Shakſpeare was born April 23, 1564; was baptized April 26, 1564; died April 23, 1616; and was interred April 25, 1616.

He had three children by his wife; Suſannah, baptized May 26, 1583: ſhe married John Hall, gentlemen; died July 11, 1649, aged 66 years; and was interred in Stratford church, July 16, 1649: the other two were twins, a ſon and daughter, who were baptized by the names of Hamnet and Judith, February 2, 1584-5. Hamnet lived but about twelve years, and was buried Auguſt 11, 1596; Judith married Thomas Quiney, gentleman; ſhe died at the advanced age of ſeventy-ſeven years; and was interred at Stratford, February 9, 1661-2. It is needleſs to enumerate his poſterity beyond the firſt generation, as there is nothing more

remarkable in them than in his anceſtors; but in him exiſted the moſt comprehenſive mind that ever animated a merely-human form; whoſe emanations have enriched this iſland beyond all literary compariſon: ſuch an iſſue we and our progeny may glory in "*to the crack of doom*," for till then will the writings of William Shakſpeare be held in almoſt-idolatrous admiration!

Benjamin Jonſon, rare Ben Jonſon! as he was emphatically ſtiled, was the contemporary, the co-adjutor, the friend of Shakſpeare! away then with all invidious reflections on rough Ben! be he ſpoken of with candour, for his deſerts were great!

Yet, to his demerits, not his merits, is he beholden for notice in this theatrical ſketch; intended only as a brief account of Engliſh Actors. Jonſon was, or rather endeavoured to be, a Player; for he failed moſt egregiouſly in the attempt: but, having an inclination to, and a taſte for the ſtage, thoſe endowments which took an ungracious form when perſonally obtruded, were, when given to the audience through the medium of his mind, highly applauded.

In leſs-affected phraſe, he was a wretched actor, and an excellent poet.

The Rev. P. Whalley, the late learned editor of Jonſon's Works, has prefixed thereto the following particulars reſpecting "Rare Ben!"

Benjamin Jonſon was deſcended from an ancient family in Scotland: his grandfather was originally of Annandale in that kingdom, and removed from thence to Carliſle in the reign of Henry VIII. under whom he enjoyed ſome poſt or office. The father of Jonſon was a ſufferer in the time of Queen Mary, and probably on the account of religion. He was not only impriſoned, but loſt his eſtate, and afterwards entered into holy orders. It ſhould ſeem that he did not enter into orders, till after the death of Mary, and when Queen Elizabeth was in poſſeſſion of the crown. Whether he then lived at Carliſle, or at what time he left it with his family, is uncertain. But we find that he reſided in Weſtminſter at the time of his death. This happened in the year 1574, about a month before the birth of Benjamin his ſon. It is no where ſaid on what day,

or in what month of that year, nor in what part of Weſtminſter, Jonſon was born. Conjecture would lead us to imagine that he was born in the pariſh of St. Martin in the Fields. There was then a private ſchool in that church, and to that he was firſt ſent for education.

He was afterwards removed from thence, and ſent to Weſtminſter ſchool, where Camden was his maſter. Whilſt he continued there, his mother married a ſecond huſband, by trade a bricklayer. As her ſon grew up, and was fit to be employed, his mother took him home, and obliged him to work at his father-in-law's buſineſs.

Diſliking his father's buſineſs, he went into the Low Countries as a ſoldier; there he diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his valour, killing and deſpoiling one of the enemies in the view of both armies. After his return home, he reſumed his former ſtudies; and then became a member of the univerſity of Cambridge; but his name doth not occur, either in the public or private regiſters of that place. It is not eaſy to determine how long a time he continued at Cambridge; it was undoubtedly but ſhort, his fortune not ſupplying him with the decent conveniencies of a learned eaſe.

When he left the univerſity, he betook himſelf to the playhouſe; a tranſition not peculiar to Jonſon, nor uncommon in the preſent age. The playhouſe he entered in was an obſcure one, in the ſkirts of the town, and called the Green Curtain, in the neighbourhood of Shoreditch or Clerkenwell. At this time likewiſe he turned his thoughts to compoſitions for the ſtage; yet, at firſt, his talents for writing, as well as thoſe for acting, were far from being excellent; and the ſucceſs in both was anſwerable.

Moſt of his earlier pieces are ſaid to have miſcarried in the repreſentation, or were afterwards neglected by him, when his genius and his judgment improved. His attempts in acting could neither procure him a ſubſiſtence, nor recommend him to a ſhare in any of the companies or theatres, which in that age were numerous in the town. His inabilities as a player were a topic of ſatire to Jonſon's adverſaries; and they have mentioned ſome characters in which he appeared with no great credit or

applauſe. Decker reproacheth him "with leaving his former occupation of morter-treader to turn actor;" and informs us particularly, "that he performed the part of Zuliman at Paris-Garden: that he ambled by a play-waggon in the highway, and took mad Jeronymo's part to get ſervice among the mimics; that in this ſervice he would have continued, but could not ſet a good face on the matter, and ſo was caſhiered."

It is ungenerous to reproach a man with imperfections he cannot prevent; but Decker had no wit nor humour, and made up what was wanting in both by contumely and abuſe. Happy was it for Jonſon, that his poverty was his chief crime: and that his adverſaries could accuſe him rather of the lowneſs of his fortunes, than the ignominy of his mind or manners.

Whilſt he was thus a retainer to the ſtage, he had the misfortune to be engaged in a duel; but Jonſon was not the aggreſſor. In this rencounter he killed his opponent, who had challenged him; and he himſelf was wounded in the arm by his adverſary's ſword, ten inches longer than his own. Decker hath caſually told us, this antagoniſt was a player. For this offence he was committed to priſon; and, during his confinement, he was viſited by a popiſh prieſt, who taking the advantage of his melancholy and dejection of ſpirits, made him a convert to the church of Rome. He continued twelve years in the Romiſh communion, but afterwards recanted, and was reconciled to the church of England. It is unknown how long he was kept in priſon, and equally uncertain by what method he obtained a releaſement from it.

We have now brought Jonſon to about the 24th year of his age, from whence we are to date the riſe of his reputation as a dramatic writer. About this time his acquaintance commenced with Shakſpeare, who began it, as we are told, with a remarkable piece of ſervice and good-nature; nor is Jonſon to be taxed with want of gratitude, or eſteem for his friend. He had wrote a play or two which neither added to his reputation or his profit. He was now offering another to the public, and had put it into the hands of a perſon, who running it over in a careleſs ſupercilious manner, was returning it to him with anſwer, that it would be of no ſervice to their company. Shakſpeare happened luckily to caſt his eye upon it; and

company. Shakſpeare happened luckily to caſt his eye upon it; and found ſomething ſo well in it as to engage him to read it through, and afterwards to recommend the poet and his writings to the public. The name of the play is no where mentioned.

In the year 1598, his comedy, intitled *Every Man in his Humour*, was acted by the Lord Chamberlain's ſervants. Their theatre was called the Globe, and ſituate on the Bank-ſide in Southwark. Shakſpeare belonged to it, and was a performer in this comedy of Jonſon. After this he produced a play regularly every year, for ſome years ſucceſſively.

In the reigns of James the Firſt, and his ſucceſſor Charles, the exhibition of *Maſques* became a principal diverſion of the court.

Jonſon was the chief factor for the court; moſt of the Maſques and Entertainments were written by him; and there ſeldom paſſed a year in which he did not furniſh one or two poetical pieces of this kind. In the ſcenical decoration of theſe ſeveral entertainments, Jonſon had Inigo Jones for an aſſociate; and the neceſſary devices for each ſeem to have been deſigned and ordered by him with delicacy, and grandeur of taſte.

On the death of Samuel Daniel in October, 1619, Jonſon ſucceeded to the vacant laurel.

The laureat's pay was originally a penſion of one hundred marks *per annum*; but, in 1630, Jonſon preſented a petition to king Charles, requeſting him to make thoſe marks as many pounds. His petition was granted; and accordingly on the ſurrendry of his former letters patent, new ones were iſſued, appointing him the annual penſion of one hundred pounds, and a tierce of Spaniſh wine. The ſame ſalary is continued to this day.

In the decline of his life, Jonſon was ſeized with the palſy, which we ſuppoſe afflicted him till the time of his death. He died on the ſixth of Auguſt, 1637, in the ſixty-third year of his age, and three days after he was interred in Weſtminſter-Abbey, at the north-weſt end, near the belfry, under the eſcutcheon of Robert de Ros or Roos. Over his grave is a common pavement ſtone, and on it are engraven theſe words: O Rare Ben Jonson!

It appears that Jonſon was married, and had ſeveral children, but we know nothing of his wife, or her deſcent. His eldeſt ſon was Benjamin, which was probably the name of Jonſon's father, and his eldeſt daughter Mary.

His perſon was corpulent and large; and his face, if we may believe his admirers, reſembled Menander's, as the head of that poet is repreſented upon antient gems and medals. His diſpoſition was reſerved, and ſaturnine; and ſometimes not a little oppreſſed with the gloom of a ſplenetic imagination. He hath been often repreſented as of an envious, arrogant, over-bearing temper, and inſolent and haughty in his converſe: but theſe ungracious drawings were the performance of his enemies, who certainly were not ſolicitous to give a flattering likeneſs of the original.

He was laborious and indefatigable in his ſtudies; his reading was copious and extenſive; his memory ſo tenacious and ſtrong, that when turned of forty, he could have repeated all that he had ever wrote; his judgment accurate and ſolid; and often conſulted by thoſe who knew him well, in branches of very curious learning, and far remote from the flowery paths loved and frequented by the muſes. The lord Falkland, in his elegy, celebrates him as an admirable ſcholar; and ſaith, that the extracts he took, and the obſervations which he made on the books he read, were themſelves a treaſure of learning, though the originals ſhould happen to be loſt.

In his friendſhips he was cautious and ſincere, yet accuſed of levity and ingratitude to his friends: but his accuſers were the criminals; inſenſible of the charms, and ſtrangers to the privileges of friendſhip. For the powers of friendſhip, not the leaſt of virtues, can only be experienced by the virtuous and good; and with theſe Jonſon was happily connected in the bonds of intimacy and affection. Randolph and Cartwright revered him as the great reformer, and as the father of the Britiſh ſtage; and gloried in the honorary title of his adopted ſons: Shakeſpeare [indeed the father of the Britiſh ſtage!] had cheriſhed his infant muſe; Beaumont and Fletcher eſteemed and revered him; Donne had commended his

merit; and Camden, the Strabo of Britain, and Selden, a living library, knew how to prize his literature and judgment. Stern and rigid as his virtue was, this Cato of poets was eaſy and ſocial in the convivial meetings of his friends; and the laws of his Sympoſia, inſcribed over the chimney of the Apollo, a room in the Devil-Tavern [formerly] near Temple-Bar, where he kept his club, ſhew us that he was neither averſe to the pleaſures of converſation, nor ignorant of what would render it agreeable and improving. It is true that he was ſparing in his commendations of the works of others, which probably gave occaſion to accuſe him of envy, and ill-nature; but when he commends, he commends with ſincerity and warmth. A man of ſenſe is always cautious in giving characters; nor will an honeſt man applaud where he cannot approve; and Jonſon well knew the people may admire, but to praiſe is an act of knowledge and of judgment.

By the death of Jonſon his family itſelf became extinct, the only iſſue he hath left being his Plays and Poems; and their fate hath in ſome meaſure reſembled his. Yet ſuch is the felicity of their better fortunes, that ſurviving the attacks of envious contemporary rivals, they have received from the juſtice of diſcerning unprejudiced poſterity, a fair, and an increaſing fame. With thoſe, whoſe taſte for ſimple and ſtriking copies of nature, is yet uncorrupted by the faſtidious delicacy of faſhionable refinements, the works of Jonſon ſtand high in eſteem: and as they are read from age to age, they will perpetuate his name with all the honours which his genius and his learning deſerve.

Ben's laſt Biographer, Dr. Anderſon, in the fourth volume of "*A Complete Edition of the Poets of Great Britain*," 8vo. 1793, gives this candid ſummary of our Poet's merits and defects.

Jonſon is univerſally allowed to have been the moſt learned and judicious poet of his age. He was familiarly acquainted with the beſt ancient authors, from whom he has freely borrowed, and was the firſt that brought critical learning into vogue. His learning is to be ſeen in every thing he

wrote; yet a juſt decorum and preſervation of character, with propriety of circumſtance and of language, are his ſtriking excellencies, and eminently diſtinguiſh his correctneſs and art. What he borrows from the ancients, he generally improves by the uſe and application. In his imitations and tranſlations from claſſic authors, he thinks and expreſſes his thoughts like them; but he commonly borrows with the air of a conqueror, and adorns himſelf in their dreſs, as with the ſpoils and trophies of victory.

His tranſlation of *Horace's Art of Poetry* is ſo cloſe as to be comprehended in the ſame number of lines. His occaſional poems are chiefly encomiaſtic or ſatirical. They abound in maſculine ſenſe and poignant wit, with an unfortunate intermixture of puerile conceit, and coarſe raillery. His *Epigrams* are ſometimes happily turned; but more frequently pointleſs. His *Epitaphs* are univerſally admired, and juſtly entitled to the higheſt praiſe. His *Songs* are ſprightly and elegant, and deſervedly popular. The merit of his *Lyric pieces* is much greater than has yet been allowed. His *Hymn to Diana* is delicate both in the ſentiment and the expreſſion, the images are pictureſque; the verſe eaſy and flowing. His *Ode Pindaric* is a true and regular Pindaric; and the firſt, if not the only one in our language, that has a juſt claim to that title. He has followed the manner of Pindar with great exactneſs. The terms of art, denoted by the *turn*, the *counter-turn*, and the *ſtand*, are a tranſlation of the *Strophe*, *Antiſtrophe*, and *Epode*, which divided the Greek odes.

The *Charm* in the *Maſque of the Queens*, may bear a compariſon with [*Quære?* if it do not excel] the witches ſong in "Macbeth."

His *Elegy on the death of the Marchioneſs of Winchеſter* has been imitated by Pope, in his pathetic Elegy "to the memory of an unfortunate Lady." His poetry has more ſtrength than ſmoothneſs: his verſification is ſometimes flowing and eaſy; but more frequently harſh, and even deficient in meaſure. In all his pieces are to be found marks of good ſenſe, a ſtrong, and ſometimes a ſublime vein of poetry, ſterling wit, moral ſatire, and unrivalled erudition."

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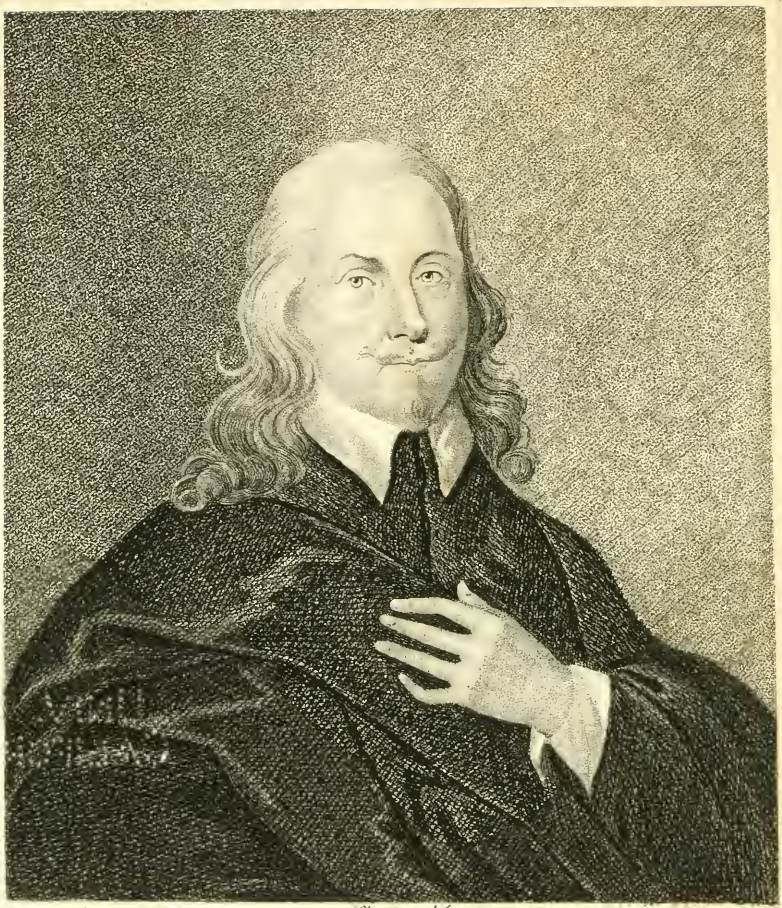

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RICH.D PERKINS.

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The foregoing ſketch being intended as an introduction only to the following memoirs of a few performers, accompanying their portraits, the reader is requeſted to conſider it merely as ſuch; to receive the memoirs of early actors, however ſcanty, as the beſt in the editor's power to compile; and to pardon the brevity of what is ſaid of more modern performers, &c. as full accounts of moſt of them are to be found in books in almoſt every one's poſſeſſion.

RICHARD PERKINS

WAS one of the performers belonging to the Cockpit Theatre in Drury-lane. His name is printed among those who acted in *Hannibal and Scipio*, by *Nabbes*; *The Wedding*, by *Shirley*; and *The Fair Maid of the Weſt*, by *Heywood*.

After the playhouſes were ſhut up, on account of the confuſion ariſing from the civil wars, *Perkins* and *Sumner*, who belonged to the ſame houſe, lived together at Clerkenwell, where they died and were buried. They both died ſome years before the reſtoration.

Dodſley's *Old Plays*, ſecond edition, v. 8, p. 303.

In "The Prologue to the Stage at the Cockpit," ſpoken before the repreſentation of Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, in which the famous Edward Alleyn had originally performed the character of *Barabas*, now attempted by Perkins, this apology for him appears.

" ———————— nor is't hate
" To merit, in him who doth perſonate
" Our Jew this day, nor is it his ambition
" To exceed, or equal, being of condition

" More modeſt; this is all that he intends,
" (And that too at the urgence of ſome friends)
" To prove his beſt, and, if none here gainſay it,
" The part he hath ſtudied, and intends to play it."

Wright, in his *Hiſtoria Hiſtrionica*, ſays, " Thoſe of principal note at the Cockpit, were Perkins, Michael Bowyer, Sumner, William Allen, and Bird, eminent actors, and Robins, a comedian." By this diſtinction Wright ſeems to have appropriated the title of *actor* to a performer of tragic characters.

At the concluſion of Webſter's *White Devil*, 1631, is the following eulogium on Perkins.

" For the action of the play, 'twas generally well, and I dare affirme, with the joint teſtimony of ſome of their owne quality, (for the true imitation of life, without ſtriving to make nature a monſter) the beſt that ever became them: whereof, as I make a generall acknowledgement, ſo in particular, I must remember the well approved induſtrie of my friend *Maſter Perkins*, and confeſſe the worth of his action did crowne both the beginning and end." There is great intelligence in his countenance, which is very expreſſive; and, if the face be an index of the mind, we may reaſonably ſuppoſe that he felt and pourtrayed the paſſions like another *Alleyn*.

Perkins wrote a copy of verſes prefixed to *Heywood*'s Apology for Actors.

TOM BOND.

COMEDIAN.

From an Original Picture in Dulwich Coll.

TOM BOND.

OF Bond nothing is known to the preſent editor, but that he acted in Shakerley Marmion's comedy of *Holland's Leaguer*, 1632.

To *Chapman*'s Bussy D'Ambois, a Tragedy, 1641, (firſt printed in 1607) is prefixed a Prologue; in ſome reſpects ſimilar to that relating to *Perkins*, on his attempting the part of *Barabas:* in which are the following lines.

" ——————————*Field* is gone
" Whoſe action firſt did give it name, and one
" Who came the neereſt to him, is denide
" By his gray beard to ſhew the height and pride
" Of D'Ambois youth and braverie;——————
" ——————————————————
" —— —— —— a third man with his beſt
" Of care and paines defends our intereſt;
" As *Richard* he was lik'd, nor doe wee feare,
" In perſonating *D'Ambois*, hee'le appeare
" To faint, or goe leſſe, ſo your free conſent
" As heretofore give him encouragement."

It has been ſuggeſted to the editor by *J. P. Kemble*, Eſq. Manager of Drury-lane Theatre; in whoſe matchleſs collection of Old Plays is the above-mentioned edition of *Buſſy D'Ambois;* and who is no leſs acute in the ſtudy, than affecting on the ſtage; that the above lines allude to, and by the *third man* is meant, the now-ſo-little-known *Tom Bond.* Mr. *Kemble* is almoſt certain that he has met with ſuch information in ſome old tract, or poem; but, not having taken a me-

morandum, he cannot now refer to it. Should this be the fact, we may conclude that *Bond* was an actor of some celebrity; nor, were it otherwise, is it likely that his portrait should have been thought worthy of preservation: had he lived at a later period, we should, no doubt, have had some information concerning him from honest Old *Downes;* but for whose *Roscius Anglicanus* we should have known little or nothing of some celebrated actors: many such, in the infancy of the English theatre, having *strutted and fretted their hour upon the stage*, are *heard of no more*, not having *left a rack behind!*

To rescue from oblivion the names, and the *names only*, of several actors; of whom no mention is made in any theatrical history, or document, known to the editor; the following is appended.

In a copy of the first edition of Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*, 1601; (in the editor's possession) in which the scene is laid in Italy, and the characters have Italian names: the actors' names, some at length, some abbreviated, are written opposite to the characters; in an old hand, very similar to, if it be not really, Ben Jonson's own handwriting: *viz.*

"The number and names of
the Actors.

Lorenzo senior.	*Lane.*	Giulliano.	*Taſh:*
Prospero.	*Quintin.*	Lorenzo junior.	*Cary.*
Thorello.	*Yorke.*	Biancha.	[no name]
Stephano.	*Blaxton.*	Hesperida.	[no name]
Doctor Clement.	*Collin:*	Peto.	*Turrit.*
Bobadilla.	*Leyb:*	Matheo.	*Rynolds.*
Musco.	*Fr:*	Pizo.	[no name]
Cob.	*Hinde.*	Tib.	*War.*"

Between the characters and the actors' names, *Pizo* excepted, are also written the two or three first letters of the names of some of the above-mentioned performers, opposed to different characters from those allotted them in the above list; and of others, who do not occur therein: all which have a pen drawn through them. Under *Rynolds* has been written another name, it is believed, *Greene;* making both names indistinct. The curious in dramatic lore will not, it is hoped, be displeased with even trifles such as these.

In Nash's "*Pierce Penilesse his Supplication to the Divell,*" 1592, is a "defence of plays," in which four actors are specified; two of them, *Tarlton* and *Alleyn*, are known to us by various anecdotes and encomiums; many of which have been collected by the present editor, and published in Harding's *Biographical Mirror;* of the other two, we know little more than their names, *Knell* and *Bentley:* though, from what follows, it appears that in their time they equalled, if not surpassed, all others. Nash says, "if I ever write any thing in Latine, (as I hope one day I shall) not a man of any desert heere amongst us, but I will have up. *Tarlton, Ned Allen, Knell, Bentley,* shall be made known to *Fraunce, Spayne,* and *Italie:* and not a part that they surmounted in, more than other, but I will there note and set downe, with the manner of their habites and attyre." Which promise it is "*devoutly to be wished*" he had performed. In "Emendations and Additions" to "An Historical Account of the Rise and Progress of the English Stage," by *Edmund Malone,* Esq. in his edition of *Shakspeare,* 1790, is the following curiosity relating to *Knell, Bentley, Alleyn,* and *Peele.*

Mr. *Malone* says, I insert the following letter, which has been lately found at Dulwich College, as a literary curiosity. It shews how very highly Alleyn the player was estimated. What the wager was, it is now impossible to ascertain. It probably was, that Alleyn would equal his predecessors Knell and Bently, in some part which they had performed,

and in which his contemporary, George Peel, had likewife been admired. "Your anfwer the other night fo well pleafed the gentlemen, as I was fatisfied therewith, though to the hazard of the wager: and yet my meaning was not to prejudice *Peele*'s credit, neither wolde it, though it pleafed you fo to excufe it. But beinge now growen farther in queftion, the partie affected to Bently, feornynge to win the wager by your deniall, hath now given you libertie to make choyce of any one play that either Bently or Knell plaide; and leaft this advantage agree not with your mind, he is contented both the plaie and the tyme fhall be referred to the gentlemen here prefent. I fee not how you canne any waie hurt your credit by this action: for if you excell them, you will then be famous; if equall them, you win both the wager and credit; if fhort of them, wee muft and will faie, NED ALLEN STILL.

Your friend to his power,

W. P.

"Deny mee not, fweet Ned; the wager's downe,
"And twice as muche commaunde of me or myne;
"And if you wynne, I fwear the half is thine,
"And for an overplus an Engliſh crowne:
"Appoint the tyme, and ſtint it as you pleas,
"Your labor's gaine, and that will prove it eaſe."

This letter is, in refpect to the time when it was written, as if an admirer of Mr. *Kemble*'s talents fhould now incite him to a fimilar trial of dramatic fkill, in fome chef d'œuvres of thofe great maſters of the hiſtrionic art, *Garrick* and *Barry;* the *Kitely* of one, or *Anthony* of the other. *Alleyn*, were there no other monument of his fame, has an imperifhable one in *Ben Jonfon*'s panegyrical verfes on him; of *Knell*, *Bentley*, and *Peele*, whom the great *Alleyn* fhrunk from a comparifon with, fcarcely any memorial is left but the bare mention of their names.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

Harding del.t R. Cann Sculp.

WILLIAM CARTWRIGHT,

COMEDIAN,

From an Original Picture in Dulwich College

WILLIAM CARTWRIGHT.

DOWNES's *Roſcius Anglicanus*, printed in 1708, begins thus: "In the reign of King Charles the Firſt, there were ſix play-houſes allow'd in town: The *Black-Fryars* Company; His Majeſty's Servants; The Bull, in *St. John's-ſtreet;* another in *Saliſbury Court;* another call'd The *Fortune;* another at the *Globe;* and the ſixth at the Cockpit in *Drury-Lane*, all which continu'd acting till the beginning of the Civil Wars. The ſcattered remnant of ſeveral of theſe houſes, upon King *Charles*'s reſtoration, fram'd a company who acted again at the Bull, and built them a new houſe in *Gibbon's Tennis Court*, in *Clare-Market;* in which two places they continu'd acting all 1660, 1661, 1662, and part of 1663. In this time they built them a new theatre in *Drury-Lane:* Mr. *Thomas Killigrew* gaining a patent from the King in order to create them the King's Servants; and from that time they call'd themſelves his Majeſty's Company of Comedians in *Drury-Lane.*

Whoſe names were, *viz.*

Mr. Theophilus Bird.
Mr. Hart.
Mr. Mohun.
Mr. Lacy.
Mr. Burt.
Mr. Cartwright.
Mr. Clun.
Mr. Baxter.
Mr. Robert Shatterel.
Mr. William Shatterel.
Mr. Duke.
Mr. Hancock.
Mr. Kynaſton.
Mr. Winterſel.
Mr. Bateman.
Mr. Blagden."

A note on this liſt, by Mr. Thomas Davies, in the ſecond edition of *Roſcius Anglicanus*, printed in *The Literary Muſeum*, 1792, ſays, "It appears by this liſt of the actors of Drury-Lane, that all the [ſurviving] performers who had acted before the civil wars, were ſelected to complete the King's company; and *Kynaſton* taken from the company that acted under *Rhodes*, the bookſeller, at the Cockpit, Drury-Lane. *Winterſel* originally belonged to the private houſe, in Saliſbury-Court; and is mentioned in the Key to the Rehearſal as a very judicious actor. *Cartwright* was of the ſame company of actors as *Winterſel*."

Cartwright, therefore, was one of the old ſtock; and, if not one of the original performers in Shakſpeare and Jonſon's plays, had performed with thoſe who were.

After the mention of others who "came not into the company 'till after they had begun at *Drury-Lane*," Downes ſays, "The company being thus compleat, they opened the new theatre in *Drury-Lane*, on *Thurſday*, in *Eaſter* week, being the 8th day of *April*, 1663, with the Humourous Lieutenant." Then follows a liſt of plays repreſented by this company, in which Cartwright performed the following characters. Corbaccio in The Fox, Moroſe in The Silent Woman, Sir Epicure Mammon in the Alchemiſt, Lygones in A King and No King, Brabantio in Othello, Falſtaff in King Henry the Fourth, Prieſt in The Indian Emperor, Major Oldfox in the Plain Dealer, Apollonius in Tyrannick Love, Mario in the Aſſignation, John in The Deſtruction of Jeruſalem, Harmogenes in Marriage Alamode, Lord Latimer in The Black Prince, Abenamar in The Conqueſt of Granada, and Cacafogo in Rule a Wife and Have a Wife.

After giving individual praiſe to Hart, Mohun, and Winterſel, Downes adds; "Then Mr. *Burt*, *Shatterel*, *Cartwright*, and ſeveral other good actors, but to particularize their commendations would be too tedious; I refer you therefore to the ſeveral books, their names being there inſerted." Meaning, the Dramatis Perſonæ of the ſeveral plays in which

they performed. A note by Mr. Davies, in the ſecond edition of *Roſcius Anglicanus*, ſays; "*Lacy* play'd *Falſtaff* during the life of *Cartwright*; on account, I ſuppoſe, of his ſuperior excellence: *Langbaine* ſpeaks of *Lacy*'s admirable repreſentation of Falſtaff."

This, however true, does not derogate from the merit which Cartwright might have previouſly poſſeſſed; he was now grown old, and had perhaps loſt ſome of his former ſpirit and humour, which qualities the younger Lacy poſſeſſed in a very eminent degree: for, ſtrange as it may appear to thoſe not converſant with the ſtage, it is an undoubted truth, that, to perform an old character, ſuch as Falſtaff in particular, well, the actor muſt poſſeſs that vigour and vivacity ſeldom enjoyed in the decline of life.

After much ſtage-hiſtory, irrelevant to Cartwright, Downes ſays; "All the preceding plays, being the chief that were acted in Dorſet-Garden, from November 1671, to the year 1682; at which time the patentees of each company united patents; and, by ſo incorporating, the *Duke*'s company were made the *King*'s company, immediately removed to the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane. Upon this union, Mr. *Hart*, being the heart of the company under Mr. *Killigrew's* patent, never acted more, by reaſon of his malady, being afflicted with the ſtone and gravel, of which he died ſome time after: having a ſalary of forty ſhillings a week to the day of his death. But the remnant of that company, as Major *Mohun*, Mr. *Cartwright*, Mr. *Kynaſton*, Mr. *Griffin*, Mr. *Goodman*, Mr. *Duke Watſon*, Mr. *Powel* ſenior, Mr. *Wiltſhire*, Mrs. *Corey*, Mrs. *Bowtell*, Mrs. *Cook*, Mrs. *Montford*, &c." [continued to perform. ſhould follow, but is wanting.]

Downes proceeds. "The mixt company then reviv'd the ſeveral old and modern plays, that were the property of Mr. *Killigrew*: as *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife*; Mr. *Betterton* acting *Michael Perez*; Don *Leon* Mr. *Smith*; *Cacafogo* Mr. *Cartwright*; *Margaretta* Mrs. *Barry*; *Eſtifania*, Mrs. *Cook*."

This is the laſt mention of Cartwright by Downes.

Davies, in his *Dramatic Miſcellanies*, 2d. edition, Vol. I, p. 213, ſays; "The original performer of Falſtaff was, doubtleſs, that excellent comedian W. Lowin; [whom Cartwright had, in all probability, ſeen perform that character] the praiſe and boaſt of his time for variety of comic parts. In Downes's Roſcius Anglicanus, we have the name of Cartwright for Falſtaff's repreſentative, ſoon after the Reſtoration. Little is ſaid of this player by any ſtage-hiſtorian. We find his name in the Rehearſal, in which he ſpoke Bayes's prologue, I think, and acted one of the Majeſties of Brentford. Cartwright was a bookseller, and lived in Turn-ſtile, Holborn. He left his books by will to Dulwich Hoſpital. Lacy, a favourite actor of Charles II. who had his picture drawn in three different characters, ſtill to be ſeen at Hampton Court, ſucceeded Cartwright in Falſtaff. Langbaine ſpeaks of him as the moſt perfect comic player of his time." Whatever might have been the comparative merits of Cartwright and Lacy, the former muſt have been an actor of conſiderable ability to ſuſtain ſuch characters as Corbaccio, Moroſe, Sir Epicure Mammon, Cacafogo, and Falſtaff, with Hart and Mohun, and, in his decline with Betterton, oppoſed to him in the plays wherein those characters occur.

In the firſt volume of *Lyſons'* Environs of London are the following notices of *Cartwright*. "The Catalogue [of the pictures in the picture-gallery of Dulwich College] which is in the hand-writing of Mr. Cartwright, by whom they were bequeathed to the college, aſcertains both their names and prices. Many which are there enumerated do not now appear; perhaps Cartwright had diſpoſed of them before his death." [Among the pictures are] "Mr. Cartwright, ſen. the actor; Mr. Cartwright, jun. the actor. These pictures coſt 15*l* each. The former of theſe, whoſe name was William, was one of the Palſgrave's ſervants in 1622. The portrait, which is a very bad one, repreſents him in a laced band and cuffs. Cartwright the younger, is

in a Vandyke dress; of him nothing certainly is known: he probably was ſon to the former. There is a third portrait of a Cartwright, an actor, called in the catalogue, 'my own portrait.' [This *third* Cartwright is the ſubject of the preſent compilation] This is a good picture by Greenhill: he is repreſented in a black robe and flowing peruke, with his hand on a dog's head. His name alſo was William. He was one of Killigrew's company at the original eſtabliſhment of Drury-Lane, where he played Falſtaff. This Cartwright, by his will dated September 1686, left his books and pictures, ſeveral articles of furniture, and 390 pieces of gold, to Dulwich College; but his ſervants defrauded the College of the greater part both of the furniture and money, of which they received only 65*l.*"

[The portrait of *Bond*, the actor, is among thoſe given by *Cartwright* to Dulwich College.]

"Adjoining the Audit-room [of the College], is a ſmall library, in which are the books bequeathed to the College by Mr. Cartwright. This library formerly contained a very valuable collection of old plays, which were given by the College to Mr. Garrick, when he was making his theatrical collection, in exchange for ſome more modern publications. There ſtill remain ſome ſcarce editions of books in various departments of literature, as it may be imagined would be found amongſt the ſtock in trade of a bookſeller who lived in the middle of the laſt [the 17th] century."

From *Cartwright*'s having been a bookſeller, as well as an actor, we may infer that he was induſtrious; from his dying poſſeſſed of ſo much property, that he was prudent; and, from his liberal bequeſt to Dulwich College, that he was charitable.

JOSEPH HARRIS.

WHATEVER may be here ſaid of this once-celebrated actor, being derived from Downes's *Roſcius Anglicanus;* which, however ill-written, is, almoſt, the only ſource of information; will be given as it ſtands in the firſt edition of that repoſitory, 1708: with Mr. Davies's note in the ſecond edition, 1789, and an account of *Harris* in his *Dramatic Miſcellanies*, 2d. edit. V. I, p. 353 ſeq. chiefly extracted from Downes.

Harris is introduced to us in the *Roſcius Anglicanus* in the following manner.

" In the year 1659, General *Monk*, marching then his army out of *Scotland* to *London*. Mr. *Rhodes* a bookſeller being wardrobe-keeper formerly (as I am inform'd) to King *Charles* the Firſt's Company of Comedians in *Black-Friars;* getting a licenſe from the then governing ſtate, fitted up a houſe then for acting call'd the *Cock-Pit* in *Drury-Lane*, and in a ſhort time compleated his Company. Their names were, *viz.* Mr. *Betterton*," &c. After this company had performed there ſome time, Downes thus proceeds;

" In this interim, Sir *William Davenant* gain'd a patent from the King, and created Mr. *Betterton*, and all the reſt of Rhodes's company, the King's Servants; who where ſworn by my Lord *Manchester*, then Lord Chamberlain, to ſerve his Royal Highneſs the Duke of *York*, at the Theatre in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*. Note, *The Three* [recte *Four*] *following, were new actors taken in by Sir* William, *to compleat the Company he had from Mr.* Rhodes.

Mr. *Harris*. Mr. *Richards*.
Mr. *Price*. Mr. *Blagden*."

S. Harding Del.

E. Harding Jun.r Sculp.

JOSEPH HARRIS.

COMEDIAN.

from an Original Picture in the Collection of the Earl of Orford at Strawberry Hill

Downes then informs us that Sir William opened the new Theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields in the Spring, 1662, with the firſt and ſecond part of *The Siege of Rhodes*, "having new ſcenes and decorations, being the firſt that e're were introduced in *England*. Mr. *Betterton* acted Solyman the Magnificent, Mr. *Harris*, *Alphonſo*."—"The next was the Wits, a comedy, writ by Sir *William Davenant;* the part of the Elder *Palatine*, perform'd by Mr. *Betterton;* the Younger *Palatine* by Mr. *Harris*."—"The tragedy of *Hamlet;* Hamlet being perform'd by Mr. *Betterton*, Sir *William* (having ſeen Mr. *Taylor* of the *Black-Fryars* Company act it, who being inſtructed by the author Mr. *Shakeſpear*) taught Mr. *Betterton* in every particle of it; which by his exact performance of it,* gain'd him eſteem and reputation, ſuperlative to all other plays. *Horatio* by Mr. *Harris;*" &c. "No ſucceeding tragedy for ſeveral years got more reputation, or money to the company than this."

"Love and Honour, wrote by Sir *William Davenant:* this play was richly cloath'd; the King giving Mr. *Betterton* his coronation ſuit, in which he acted the part of Prince *Alvaro;* the Duke of *York* giving Mr. *Harris* his, who did Prince *Proſpero;* and my Lord of Oxford gave Mr. Joſeph Price his, who did *Lionel* the Duke of *Parma*'s ſon."

"*Romeo* and *Juliet*, wrote by Mr. *Shakeſpear: Romeo* was acted by Mr. *Harris;*† *Mercutio* by Mr. *Betterton;*" &c. "It took ſuc-

* which by his exact performance of it] This paſſage is, unintentionally, omitted in the ſecond edition of *Roſcius Anglicanus*, 1789. F. G. W.

By the variety of parts which this gentleman ſuſtain'd, we may fairly conjecture that he was a general as well as favourite actor; a complete maſter of his profeſſion: *Romeo*, Sir *Andrew Ague cheek*, Cardinal *Wolſey*, *Medley* in the Fop's Fortune, [recte *The Man of Mode*] Sir *Joſlin Jolly* in She Wou'd if She Cou'd, *Harry* the Fifth, and *a Ballad Singer*, required various and oppoſite abilities. He either died, or left the ſtage, ſome years before the union of the King's and Duke of York's company, for I do not ſee his name in any Dramatis Perſonæ of a new play, after 1676." Mr. Davies's note in *Roſ. Angl.* 2d. ed. *Harris*'s name occurs, for

ceſſively 13 days together, no other play intervening."—"Twelfth Night, or What You Will; wrote by Mr. *Shakeſpear*, had mighty ſucceſs by its well performance: Sir *Toby Belch* by Mr. *Betterton;* Sir *Andrew Ague-Cheek* by Mr. Harris," &c. "All the parts being juſtly acted crown'd the play. Note, It was got up on purpoſe to be acted on *Twelfth Night.*"—"The Villain, written by Major *Thomas Porter*, Mr. *Betterton* acting *Monſieur Briſac*, Mr. *Harris*, *Monſieur Beaupre.*"—"The Rivals, a play,* wrote by Sir *William Davenant;* the part of *Theocles* was done by Mr. *Harris; Philander* by Mr. *Betterton.*"—"King *Henry* the 8th: this play, by order of Sir *William Davenant*, was all new cloath'd in proper habits. The part of the King was ſo right and juſtly done by Mr. *Betterton*, he being inſtructed in it by Sir *William*, who had it from old Mr. *Lowen*, that had his inſtructions from Mr. *Shakeſpear* himſelf, that I dare and will aver, none can, or will come near him in this age, in the performance of that part: Mr. *Harris*'s performance of Cardinal *Wolſey*, was little inferior to that, he doing it with ſuch juſt ſtate, port and mein, that I dare affirm, none hitherto has equall'd him: every part, by the great care of Sir *William*, being exactly perform'd; it being all new cloath'd and new ſcenes; it continu'd acting 15 days together with general applauſe."—"*Love in a Tub*, wrote by Sir George *Etheridge;* Mr. *Betterton* performing Lord *Beauford*, Mr. *Harris* Sir *Frederick Frollick.*"—"*Cutter* of *Coleman-Street;* written by Mr. *Abraham Cowley;* Colonel *Jolly* perform'd by Mr. *Betterton*, Young *Trueman* Mr. *Harris.*"—"The Dutcheſs of *Malfey*, wrote by Mr. *Webſter:* Duke *Ferdinand* perform'd by Mr. *Harris: Boſola* by

the part of *Lanoo*, in the Dramatis Perſonæ of *Buſſy D'Ambois*, "newly reviſed by Mr. Durfey," 1691.

* Altered from *The Two Noble Kinſmen.*

Anecdotes of the celebrated Madam Davies, who performed in the *Rivals*, and was afterwards miſtreſs to King Charles the Second, may be ſeen in the ſecond edition of *Roſcius Anglicanus.*

Mr. *Betterton.* This play was ſo exceeding excellently *acted* in all parts; chiefly Duke *Ferdinand* and *Boſola;* it fill'd the houſe 8 days ſucceſſively, it proving one of the beſt of ſtock tragedies."—" The tragedy of *Muſtapha,* wrote by the Earl of *Orrery.* The part of *Solyman* the Magnificent was done by Mr. *Betterton; Muſtapha* Mr. *Harris.*"

" The firſt new play that was acted in 1666 was *the Tragedy of* Cambyſes, *King of* Perſia, wrote by Mr. *Settle:* Cambyſes was perform'd by Mr. *Betterton: Prexaſpes* the General, by Mr. *Harris.*"

" *Richard* the Third, or the *Engliſh* Princeſs, wrote by Mr. *Carrol,* was excellently well acted in every part; chiefly King *Richard* by Mr. *Betterton;* Duke of *Richmond* by Mr. Harris."—" King *Henry* the 5th, wrote by the Earl of *Orrery.* Mr. *Harris* acted the King; Mr. *Betterton, Owen Tudor,* Mr. *Smith* Duke of *Burgundy.* This play was ſplendidly cloath'd: the King, in the Duke of *York*'s coronation ſuit: *Owen Tudor* in King *Charles*'s; Duke of *Burgundy* in the Lord of *Oxford*'s."*

Downes next informs us that Mr. *Harris* performed *Warner,* in the comedy of Sir *Martin Marral;* Sir *Joſlin* in *She Wou'd if She Cou'd;* Sir *Poſitive At-all,* in *The Impertinents; Peregrine Woodland,* in Sir *Solomon Single;* and *Appius,* the Unjuſt Judge, in *The Unjust Judge,* or *Appius* and *Virginia.*—Then follows, " The Man's the Maſter, wrote by Sir *William Davenant,* being the laſt play he ever wrote, he dying preſently after; and was bury'd in *Weſtminſter-Abbey,* near Mr. *Chaucer*'s monument, our whole company attending his funeral. This comedy in general was very well perform'd, eſpecially the *Maſter* by Mr. *Harris;* the *Man* by Mr. *Underhill:* Mr. *Harris* and Mr.

* Theſe coronation ſuits of K. Charles II. the Duke of York, and Lord Oxford, firſt worn on the ſtage in Davenant's Love and Honour, were very unlike the coſtume of Henry the Fifth's time; Julius Cæſar might with almoſt equal propriety have been performed in the doublet of Oliver Cromwell.

Sandford ſinging the epilogue like two ſtreet ballad-ſingers. Note, *Mr.* Cademan *in this play, not long after our company began in* Dorſet-Garden; *his part being to fight with Mr.* Harris, *was unfortunately with a ſharp foil pierc'd near the eye, which ſo maim'd both his hand and ſpeech, that he can make little uſe of either; for which miſchance he has receiv'd a penſion ever ſince* 1673, *being* 35 *years a goe.*"

"The new Theatre in *Dorſet-Garden* being finiſh'd, and our company after Sir *William*'s death being under the rule and dominion of his widow the Lady *Davenant*, Mr. *Betterton*, and Mr. *Harris*, (Mr. *Charles Davenant* her ſon *acting* for her) they remov'd from *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields* thither. And on the ninth day of *November*, 1671, they open'd their new Theatre with Sir *Martin Marral*."

"Next was acted Love in a Tub."—"The firſt new play acted there was King *Charles* the VIII. of *France*."—"The next new comedy was the *Mamamouchi*, or the Citizen turn'd Gentleman, wrote by Mr. *Ravenſcraft: Trickmore* and Fencing-Maſter, by Mr. *Harris*."—"*Epſom Wells*, a comedy wrote by Mr. *Shadwell:* Mr. *Rains* was acted by Mr. *Harris: Bevil* by Mr. *Betterton*."—"About this time [1673] the company was very much recruited, having loſt by death Mr. Joſeph Price," &c. "In their rooms came in Mr. *Anthony Lee*, Mr. *Gillo*, Mr. *Jevon*, Mr. *Percival*, Mr. *Williams*, who came in a boy, and ſerv'd Mr. *Harris*." Downes then informs us that Mr. *Harris* performed Don *John* of *Auſtria*, in Otway's *Don Carlos; Medly*, in *The Man of Mode*, in 1676; and *Thoas*, in Dr. *Davenant*'s opera of *Circe:* which is the laſt mention of *Harris* in the *Roſcius Anglicanus*.

Mr. Davies's account, in his *Dramatic Miſcellanies*, is ſubjoined.

"Betterton was taught the part of Henry VIII. by Sir William Davenant, from his remembrance of the performance of the admired and accompliſhed Lowin. Old Downs gives it as his opinion, that nobody can ever approach to the great excellence which Betterton diſplayed in

acting the King. Wolſey (ſays the ſame ſtage-hiſtorian) was ſupported with great pride, port, and mien, by *Harris*, an actor, of whom we ſcarce know any thing, except that he played a variety of characters in tragedy and comedy; from that circumſtance we may infer, he muſt have enjoyed very comprehenſive abilities for the ſtage. I find his name, in Downs, prefixed to Romeo, and to Sir Andrew Ague-cheek in Twelfth Night, which are parts as diſtant, in dramatic features, as Hamlet and the Grave-digger. Harris was the actor of theſe and many other parts of equal diſſimilarity. Cibber could not have ſeen him, for his name is not in his Apology. I imagine he left the ſtage much about the time the companies of Drury-Lane and Dorſet-Gardens were, by the command of Charles II. united. Harris's name is not to be found in the dramatis perſonæ of any play ſince that period. [See the addition to Davies's note, *ſupra.*] He had formerly been joint-director of the Duke's Company with Lady Davenant and Betterton, and might poſſibly be offended that, in the treaty between Betterton, in conjunction with Davenant's ſucceſſors, and Hart and Kynaſton, of the King's Theatre, he was left out.

"By looking carefully over the Roſcius Anglicanus, I find that Harris was originally in the King's Company, but ſoon left it to join Betterton. Perhaps there was another actor of that name. Downs is ſo confuſed and inaccurate, that he does not properly attend to perſons, times, or circumſtances. His merit in ſeveral characters beſides Wolſey, is noticed by Downs, particularly in Sir Poſitive Atall, in the Impertinents of Shadwell, taken from Moliere's Les Facheux, and the part of the Maſter, in The Man's the Maſter, by Davenant. His talents were not confined to acting alone; ſinging was another of his qualifications: he and Sandford [famous for performing villainous and terrific characters] ſang a humorous ballad-epilogue in the character of two ſtreet ballad-ſingers; the ſame, I believe, which, many years afterwards, was ſung by that droll, honeſt, agreeable, fellow,

Jemmy Bencroft, and Nat Clarke. In the play of The Man's the Maſter, Harris had the misfortune to wound Cademan in the eye, [which Downes ſtrangely ſays "maim'd both his hand and ſpeech"] by uſing a ſharp inſtead of a foil, which diſabled him from acting ever after. Cademan received a penſion from the players, on that account, we may reaſonably ſuppoſe, as long as he lived, for he enjoyed it in 1708, thirty-five years after the accident."

This is merely a ſummary of Downes's account of Harris; but, as the materials for a memorial of this excellent actor, twin-ſtar of the admirable Betterton, are ſo few, it was judged proper not to omit any that could be found.

In *Betterton*'s "*Hiſtory of the Stage*," printed by *Curll*, 1741, it is ſaid, on the authority of "Old ſolemn *Boman*, the late actor of venerable memory," as *Colley Cibber* terms him, that "Mr. *Harris* was bred a ſeal-cutter, and he made Mr. *Joſeph Williams* a player."

The countenance of Harris, tho' it have a ſuitable ſeverity in the portrait of him in the character of Wolſey, poſſeſſes features apparently ſuſceptible of mild, or even comic expreſſion; and we well know that our all-verſatile Garrick had a face, which expreſſed the moſt ſublime of tragedy, and ridiculous of comedy: the ſternneſs of a Richard, the ſportiveneſs of a Ranger, the ſorrows of a Luſignan, and the ſtupidity of a Drugger!

WILLIAM PENKETHMAN.

THE earlieſt notice of this comedian the editor has met with is in Downes's *Roſcius Anglicanus;* wherein it is ſaid, "*From Candlemas* 1704, to the 23d of *April* 1706, there were 4 plays commanded to

be acted at Court at St. *James*'s, by the actors of both houſes, *viz.* Firſt, *All for Love:* Mr. Betterton acting *Marc Antony,*" &c. "The ſecond was Sir *Solomon, or the Cautious Coxcomb:* Mr. *Betterton* acting Sir *Solomon;* Mr. *Wilks, Peregrine;* Mr. *Booth,* Young *Single;* Mr. *Dogget,* Sir *Arthur Addle;* Mr. *Johnſon,* Juſtice *Wary;* Mr. *Pinkethman,* Ralph;" &c.

"The next was *The Merry Wives of Windſor,* acted the 23d of April, the Queen's coronation day; Mr. *Betterton* acting Sir *John Falſtaff;* Sir *Hugh* by Mr. *Dogget;* Mr. *Page* by Mr. *Vanbruggen;* Mr. *Ford,* by Mr. *Powell;* Dr. *Caius,* Mr. *Pinkethman;*" &c. Downes, afterwards, ſays;

"Next follows the account of the preſent Young Company (which united with the Old, in *October,* 1706.) now acting at the Theatre-Royal in *Drury-Lane;* Her Majeſty's Company of Comedians, under the government of Col. *Brett.*"

Here follow ſhort characters of *Wilks, Cyber, Eſcourt, Booth, Johnſon, Dogget,* and *Pinkethman.* Of the latter Downes ſays,

"Mr. *Pinkethman,* he's the darling of *Fortunatus,* he has gain'd more in theatres and fairs in twelve years, than thoſe that have tugg'd at the oar of acting theſe 50."

Mr. *Mills,* Mr. *Powell,* and Mr. *Bullock,* are added to this liſt. —In Curll's edition of Betterton's *Hiſtory of the Stage,* 1741, it is ſaid that "Lincoln's-Inn-Fields Theatre was opened the laſt day of April, 1695. In this were," beſides Mr. Betterton, Mrs. Barry, and Mrs. Bracegirdle, "Mr. Smith, Mr. Sandford, Mr. Underhill, Mr. Dogget, Mr. Verbruggen, Mr. Powell, Mr. Mountford, Mr. Johnſon, Mr. Penkethman, Mr. Bullock, Mr. Booth, &c."

Colley Cibber, in his "*Apology,*" after a very high eulogium on *Leigh,* in the character of Sir *William Belfond,* in *The Squire of Alſatia,* ſays; "Now, though I obſerv'd before, that *Nokes* never was tolerably touch'd by any of his ſucceſſors; yet, in this character, I

muſt own, I have ſeen *Leigh* extremely well imitated, by my late facetious friend *Penkethman*, who tho' far ſhort of what was inimitable, in the original, yet as to the general reſemblance, was a very valuable copy of him. There were two other characters, of the farcical kind, *Geta* in the *Propheteſs*, and *Crack* in Sir *Courtly Nice*, which, as they are leſs confin'd to nature, the imitation of them was leſs difficult to *Penkethman;* who, to ſay the truth, delighted more in the whimſical, than the natural. *Penkethman* had certainly, from nature, a great deal of comic power about him; but his judgment was by no means equal to it; for he would make frequent deviations into the whimſies of an harlequin." Two or three entertaining pages follow, on *Penkethman*'s performance of *Harlequin*, in *The Emperor of the Moon;* for which the reader is referred to the "*Apology.*"

Davies, in his *Dramatic Miſcellanies*, ſays;

" It muſt be confeſſed that the actors, termed low comedians, are too guilty of adding to their author's text. Hippiſley not ſeldom in this point offended, Shuter oftener, King rarely, Jonſon and Weſton ſcarcely ever; but Will. Pinkethman, of merry memory, was in ſuch full poſſeſſion of the galleries, that he would hold diſcourſe with them for ſeveral minutes."

Davies relates the following inſtance of his extreme licentiouſneſs in this reſpect.

" In the play of The Recruiting Officer, Wilks was the Captain Plume, and Pinkethman one of the Recruits. The Captain, when he enliſted him, aſked his name: inſtead of anſwering as he ought, Pinkey replied, 'Why! don't you know my name, Bob? I thought every fool had known that!' Wilks, in rage, whiſpered to him the name of the Recruit, Thomas Appletree. The other retorted aloud, 'Thomas Appletree! Thomas Devil! my name is Will Pinkethman;' and, immediately addreſſing an inhabitant of the upper regions, he ſaid, 'Hark you, friend; don't you know my name?'—'Yes, Maſter

Pinkey (ſaid a reſpondent) we know it very well.' The play-houſe was now in an uproar; the audience, at firſt, enjoyed the petulant folly of Pinkethman, and the diſtreſs of Wilks; but, in the progreſs of the joke, it grew tireſome, and Pinkey met with his deſerts, a very ſevere reprimand in a hiſs; and this mark of diſpleaſure he changed into applauſe, by crying out, with a countenance as melancholy as he could make it, in a loud and naſal twang, *Odſo! I fear I am wrong!* Cibber ſays of Penkethman, "When it has been his ill fortune to meet with a *diſgraccia*, I have known him ſay apart to himſelf, yet loud enough to be heard—*Odſo!* I believe I *am* a *little wrong here!* which once was ſo well receiv'd, by the audience, that they turn'd their reproof into applauſe."

In a poem, called "*The Players:*" a Satire. 1733, are the following lines, with the ſubjoined note.

"Quit not your Theme to win the gaping Rout,
"Nor aim at *Pinkys* Leer, with—blood—I'm out.
"An arch dull Rogue, who lets the Buſineſs cool,
"To ſhew how nicely he can play the Fool,
"Who with Buffoonery his Dulneſs clokes,
"Deſerves a cat of nine tails for his Jokes."

"This was not deſigned as an invidious reflection on the memory of Mr. *Penkethman*, who was a pleaſant and ſucceſsful comedian; but to caution others from taking ſuch liberties, as he very often did; which have been cenſured in him, notwithſtanding his uncommon pleaſantry: and muſt appear very monſtrous in perſons of leſs humour than Mr. *Penkethman.*"

Penkethman was the original *Trappanti*, in Cibber's *She Wou'd and She Wou'd not;* and Don *Lewis*, in the ſame author's *Love makes a Man;* or, *The Fop's Fortune:* which latter character, as acting is too often imitative of others, the editor has ſeen that excellent comedian *Arthur* perform; with the, *aſſumed*, naſal tone of *Penkethman.*

GEORGE FARQUHAR.

THERE are ſo many circumſtantial accounts of this gentleman extant; prefixed to his works in two volumes; in the Life of Wilks, the celebrated actor, printed for Curll, 1733; in Cibber's (as it is called) Lives of the Poets; the Biographia Dramatica; &c. that it is neceſſary to ſay here, only, that he was born at Londonderry, in Ireland, 1678; that he attempted the ſtage, without ſucceſs; that he came to England with Mr. Wilks; that he obtained a commiſſion in the army from the Earl of Orrery; and that he was the author of the following dramatic pieces; *Love and a Bottle, The Conſtant Couple, Sir Harry Wildair, The Inconſtant, The Stage Coach,* (in conjunction with *Motteux*) *The Recruiting Officer, The Twin Rivals, The Beaux' Stratagem; Poems and Eſſays;* printed in the firſt volume of his works; and a Poſthumous Poem, called *Barcelona.* He died, during the run of his laſt comedy, *The Beaux' Stratagem,* the latter end of April, 1707.

MISS NORSA.

THIS Lady's family was intimate with Mr. Rich; and, on Miſs *Fenton*'s marriage with the Duke of *Bolton,* Miſs *Norſa* was thought the moſt proper perſon to ſucceed her in the character of *Polly,* in *The Beggar's Opera:* ſhe performed but one ſeaſon. A nobleman took her off the ſtage, with the concurrence of her parents; to whom he gave

GEORGE FARQUHAR.

S. Harding del.t

Clamp sculp.t

Miss Norsa.

From a scarce Etching in the Collection of Sir Will.m Musgrave Bt

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THEOPHILUS CIBBER, COMEDIAN.

In the Character of a Fine Gentleman.

From an Original Drawing by Worlidge at the Collection of Sir William Musgrave Bart.

a bond, by which he engaged to marry her on the demiſe of his wife; from whom he had been ſeparated.

This information, which is all the editor has been able to meet with on the ſubject, was communicated to him by a Lady, now living, formerly well-known in the theatrical world by the name of *Egerton;* who was the original performer of Mrs. *Fullmer,* in the comedy of *The Weſt Indian,* and who was the god-daughter of Miſs *Norſa.* Mrs. *Egerton,* now Mrs. *Kelſe,* performed ſeveral comic characters at Drury-Lane Theatre, under Mr. *Garrick*'s management, with great applauſe; particularly *Maria,* in *Twelfth Night,* and *Mademoiſelle* in *The Provoked Wife;* in which latter character, as ſhe can not be excelled, it is probable ſhe will not be equalled: Mr. Garrick, who ſo admirably performed Sir *John Brute,* in the ſame comedy, at that period, being uſed to ſay, that Mrs. Egerton's performance of *Mademoiſelle* was as perfect and finiſhed as any he had ever beheld.

THEOPHILUS CIBBER.

OF this unfortunate man there is a very full account in the *Biographia Dramatica,* and obſervations on his acting in Davies's *Dramatic Miſcellanies;* he was ſon of the celebrated Colley Cibber; was born November 26, 1703; became an actor at a very early period; firſt married Miſs Johnſon; and, after her death, Miss Suſannah Arne, who became, when Mrs. Cibber, one of the fineſt tragic actreſſes ever ſeen; which, as we learn from T. Cibber's trial with Mr. Sloper, was in a great degree owing to the inſtructions ſhe received from her father-in-law, C. Cibber.

Theophilus produced the following dramatic pieces; *Henry the Sixth*, altered from Shakſpeare; *The Lover; Patie and Peggy; The Harlot's Progreſs; Romeo and Juliet*, altered from Shakſpeare; and *The Auction*: beſides ſeveral Eſſays, &c.

After a life tiſſued with too-often-deſerved misfortunes, he embarked for Ireland, to perform with Mr. Sheridan, in the year 1758: the ſhip in which he ſailed was wrecked, and every ſoul on board periſhed.

MR. REDMAN

WAS a comely, venerable-looking actor, of an inferior claſs, belonging to Covent-Garden Theatre, during the management of Rich and Beard; he performed Erneſto in The Orphan, and ſimilar parts, which require only a grave aſpect and delivery: the time of his birth and death are unknown to the editor; he was far advanced in life when laſt ſeen by him, and, it is conjectured, has been dead about twenty years.

His private character was irreproachable. To be a Betterton, a Garrick, or a Kemble, is the lot of few who attempt the ſtage; but, however mean their theatrical abilities, to leave a good if not a great name behind them is in the power of all.

Mr. REDMAN,

of the Theatre Royal Covent Garden.

Kersting sc Maulen Lane

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THO.s DAVIS.

Lit. of Drury Lane Theatre.

THOMAS DAVIES

WAS a man of uncommon ſtrength of mind, and prided himſelf on being through life a companion for his ſuperiors. He was born in or about the year 1712: in 1728 and 1729 he was at the univerſity of Edinburgh, completing his education; and became, as Dr. Johnſon uſed to ſay of him, "learned enough for a clergyman." In 1736 his name occurs among the Dramatis Perſonæ of Lillo's celebrated tragedy of *Fatal Curioſity*, at the theatre in the Hay-market; where he was the original performer of Young Wilmot, under the management of Henry Fielding: he afterwards commenced bookſeller in Duke's-Court, or Round-Court, near the Strand, but met with misfortunes in trade which induced him to return to the ſtage; and on the 24th of January, 1746, *Venice Preſerv'd* was acted for his benefit at Covent-Garden Theatre: when, as the play-bill ſays, the part of Pierre was *attempted* by him. Not ſucceeding, probably, to his hopes on a London ſtage, he became an itinerant, and performed at York; where he married Miſs Yarrow, daughter of an actor there, whoſe beauty was not more remarkable than her private character was ever unſullied and irreproachable. He alſo performed at Edinburgh the characters of Romeo, Richard 3d. and Ranger. He then went to Dublin; and, with his wife, performed there.

He came thence to Drury-Lane theatre, with his wife, in 1753; and, on Mr. Havard being taken ill, appeared firſt in the character of Stukely in Moore's tragedy of *The Gameſter*. Here Mr. and Mrs. Davies remained ſeveral years in good eſtimation with the town, and played many characters; if not with excellence, at leaſt with propriety and decency.

In his *Dramatic Miſcellanies*, he thus modeſtly ſpeaks of his own performance on a particular occaſion. "When ſickneſs deprived the ſtage of this valuable man [Mr. Edward Berry], Mr. Garrick called the writer of this Miſcellany to repreſent the character of Gloſter [in the Tragedy of King Lear]; the candour of the audience gave him much more encouragement than he expected;" and in the ſame entertaining work he thus ſpeaks of his wife: "Mrs. Davies, during Mrs. Cibber's illneſs, was invited to ſupply her place. She did not pretend to imitate that which was not to be attained by imitation, the action, voice, and manner of Mrs. Cibber. Mrs. Davies's figure, look, and deportment, were eſteemed to be ſo correſpondent with the idea of this amiable character [Cordelia in *King Lear*], that ſhe was diſmiſſed with no inconſiderable degree of approbation."

Churchill's indiſcriminate ſatire, in the Roſciad, endeavoured to fix ſome degree of ridicule on Mr. Davies's performance; but the pen of a ſatiriſt is not entitled to implicit credit: it, however, had the ill-effect, Dr. Johnſon ſaid, of driving this reſpectable performer from the ſtage.

In 1762 he quitted the theatre, and reſumed his former occupation of a bookſeller; but, not meeting with that ſucceſs which his attention and abilities merited, in 1778 he became a bankrupt; when, ſuch was the regard entertained for him by his friends, that they readily conſented to his re-eſtabliſhment; and none, as he ſaid himſelf, were more active to ſerve him, than thoſe who had ſuffered moſt by his misfortunes. But all their efforts might poſſibly have been fruitleſs, if his great and good friend Dr. Johnſon had not exerted all his power in his behalf. He called upon all over whom he had any influence to aſſiſt Tom Davies, and prevailed on Mr. Sheridan, patentee of Drury-Lane theatre, to let him have a benefit, which he granted on the moſt liberal terms. This event took place May 27, 1778; when Mr. Davies made his laſt appearance on the ſtage in the character of Fainall,

in Congreve's comedy of *The Way of the World;* and acquitted himſelf to the ſatisfaction of his friends and the public. In 1780, by a well-timed publication, *The Life of Mr. Garrick*, in two volumes, which paſſed through four editions, he acquired both fame and money; he alſo publiſhed, in three volumes, his *Dramatic Miſcellanies*, before-mentioned: of which a ſecond edition appeared a few days only before his death. His other works are, *Memoirs of Mr. Henderſon, A Review of Lord Cheſterfield's Characters*, a *Life of Maſſinger, Lives of Dr. John Echard, Sir John Davies, and Mr. Lillo;* and fugitive pieces without number, in proſe and verſe, in The St. James's Chronicle, and almoſt all the public news-papers.

He collected and republiſhed, in three volumes, the beautiful paſtoral poems, &c. of William Browne,* who flouriſhed in the reign of James I. and who was complimented with commendatory verſes by three of the beſt paſtoral poets this nation has produced; Drayton, Jonſon, and the unjuſtly-contemned Withers.

He alſo republiſhed the poems of Sir John Davies, Carew, and others. He likewiſe publiſhed *Fugitive Pieces*, in two volumes, to which was afterwards added a third volume; wherein were many pieces of biography, &c. by Dr. Johnſon, whoſe behaviour on that occaſion is thus deſcribed by Mrs. Piozzi. "When Davies printed the *Fugitive Pieces* without his [Dr. J.'s] knowledge or conſent; How, ſaid I, would Pope have raved, had he been ſerved ſo? 'We ſhould never (replied he) have heard the laſt on't, to be ſure; but then Pope was a narrow man. I will, however (added he), ſtorm and bluſter myſelf a little this time;'—ſo went up to London in all the wrath he could muſter up. At his return I aſked how the affair ended: 'Why

* It is a great blemiſh in Davies's edition of "The Works of William Browne," that, owing to ſome overſight, or from their having been reprinted from an imperfect copy, the contents of three pages, 78, 79, and 80, and a couplet in page 81, of edition 1625, are wanting; they ſhould follow page 99, in vol. 1, of Davies's edition, 1772.

ſaid he) I was a fierce fellow, and pretended to be very angry, and Thomas was a good-natured fellow, and pretended to be very ſorry: ſo *there* the matter ended: I believe the dog loves me dearly. Mr. Thrale (turning to my huſband), what ſhall you and I do for Tom Davies? we will do ſomething for him to be ſure." The author of the account of Mr. Davies in the Obituary of *The Gentleman's Magazine*, of which and other reſpectable publications free uſe has been made in this compilation, ſays that "he knew him well; and has paſſed many convivial hours in his company at a ſocial meeting, where his lively ſallies of pleaſantry have been uſed to ſet the table in a roar of harmleſs merriment. The laſt time he viſited them he wore the appearance of a ſpectre; and, ſenſible of his approaching end, took a ſolemn valediction. Poor Ghoſt! how would it comfort thee to know, that at a ſubſequent meeting of thy ſincere friends, the impreſſion of thy laſt appearance was not eradicated; and that every breaſt heaved a ſympathetic ſigh, lamenting the loſs of ſo excellent an aſſociate!" He died May 5, 1785, aged about 73; for, in the poſtſcript to the ſecond edition of his *Dramatic Miſcellanies*, publiſhed 1785, he mentions a circumſtance which occurr'd, he ſays, when he was in his ſeventy-third year.

He was buried, by his own deſire, in the vault of St. Paul, Covent-Garden. The following lines were written on the occaſion.

Here lies the author, actor, Thomas Davies:
Living he ſhone a very *rara avis*.
The ſcenes he play'd, life's audience muſt commend:
He honour'd Garrick—Johnſon was his friend.

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